

CLAIMS

What is Claimed Is:

1. A fluid heat exchanger for use in a fluid heating system comprising:

5 a rapidly heatable inside tube;
a hollow outside tube surrounding said inside tube;
a fluid passing between said inside tube and said outside
tube for circulation through said fluid heating system;
wherein said inside tube is rapidly heated so that said
10 fluid is rapidly heated to a predetermined temperature for use
in said fluid heating system.

2. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said
outside tube is thin-walled.

3. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said
inside and outside tubes have respective circular cross
sections.

20 4. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said
outside tube concentrically surrounds said inside tube.

5. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 further
comprising an insulating layer surrounding said outside tube.

6. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said inside tube further comprises a rapidly heatable hot portion extending longitudinally within said inside tube.

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7. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said outside tube defines an inside surface and said inside tube defines an outside surface, said inside and outside surface being electropolished.

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8. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said fluid may be raised to a supercritical condition by said rapidly heatable inside tube.

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9. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 wherein said fluid heat exchanger is of compact construction.

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10. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 1 further comprising a temperature control system having at least one sensor located along said fluid heat exchanger in sensing communication with said fluid, said temperature control system controlling the operation of said heatable inside tube by regulating said fluid temperature within a predetermined range

based on fluid temperature readings taken by said temperature control system;

wherein said inside tube is rapidly heated by said temperature control system such that said fluid is rapidly

5 heated to within said predetermined range for use in said fluid heating system.

11. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 4 further comprising at least one coiled wire interposed between said
10 inside tube and said outside tube for maintaining concentricity between said inside and outside tubes.

12. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 4 wherein said inside tube defines an outside surface having longitudinally
15 spaced raised regions extending outwardly therefrom such that concentricity is maintained between said inside and outside tubes.

13. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 6 wherein said
20 hot portion coils longitudinally within said inside tube.

14. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 8 wherein said fluid comprises carbon dioxide.

15. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 12 wherein said raised regions proceed helically along said outside tube.

5 16. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 12 wherein said outside tube defines an inside surface, said inside surface having longitudinally spaced raised regions extending inwardly therefrom to maintain concentricity between said inside and outside tubes.

10 17. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 13 wherein said inside tube further comprises first and second cold portions each having opposed inside and outside ends, said outside ends of said first cold portion and said second cold portion
15 extending outwardly from opposing ends of said inside tube, said hot portion interposed between said first and second cold portions for connection with respective said inside ends of said first and second cold portions within said inside tube;

wherein said first and second cold portions receive
20 electrical power from an electrical power source for rapidly heating said inside tube.

18. The fluid heat exchanger according to claim 16 wherein said raised regions proceed helically along said outside tube.

19. A fluid heating system comprising:

a fluid heat exchanger defining a rapidly heatable inside tube;

5 a hollow inside tube surrounding said inside tube;

a fluid passing between said inside tube and said outside tube for circulation through said fluid heating system;

a temperature control system having at least one sensor located along said fluid heat exchanger in sensing communication with said fluid, said temperature control system controlling the operation of said heatable inside tube by regulating said fluid temperature within a predetermined range based on fluid temperature readings taken by said temperature control system;

10 wherein said inside tube is rapidly heated by said temperature control system such that said fluid is rapidly heated to within said predetermined range for use in said fluid heating system.

20. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said at least one sensor is positioned in the fluid flow stream.

21. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said at least one sensor is located within said inside tube.

22. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said temperature control system further comprises a microprocessor-based controller.

5 23. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said at least one sensor may be located in the fluid flow stream and within said inside tube.

10 24. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said at least one sensor comprises a thermistor.

25. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said at least one sensor comprises a resistance temperature detector.

15 26. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said at least one sensor comprises a thermocouple.

20 27. The fluid heating system according to claim 19 wherein said fluid heating system raises the temperature level of said fluid in a substantially linear trend per unit of time.

28. The fluid heating system according to claim 20 wherein said at least one sensor is located in a raised region formed along said outside tube.

29. A fluid heat exchanger for use in a fluid heating system comprising:

a rapidly heatable inside tube;

5 a hollow outside tube closely surrounding said inside tube, said inside and outside tubes collectively formable in a number of shapes;

10 said inside tube and said outside tube defining a passageway for a fluid passing therebetween for circulation through said fluid heating system;

wherein said inside tube is rapidly heated for heating said fluid to a predetermined temperature for use in said fluid heating system.

15 30. The fluid heating system according to claim 29 wherein said passageway defines a small cross-sectional area for said fluid to pass therethrough.

20 31. The fluid heating system according to claim 29 wherein said shapes collectively formable with said inside and outside tubes define a compact construction.

32. The fluid heating system according to claim 30 wherein said passageway defines an annular cross-sectional area.

33. The fluid heating system according to claim 30 wherein the convective film coefficient along the outer periphery of said rapidly heatable inside tube is a large value.

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34. A fluid heat exchanger for use in a fluid heating system comprising:

a rapidly heatable inside tube having an outer peripheral surface;

10 a hollow outside tube closely surrounding said inside tube substantially concentrically, said inside and outside tubes collectively formable in a number of shapes;

said inside tube and said outside tube defining a passageway having a small cross-sectional area therebetween;

15 a fluid passing along said passageway at a low flow rate for circulation through said fluid heating system;

a temperature control system having at least one sensor located along said fluid heat exchanger in sensing communication with said fluid, said temperature control system controlling the
20 operation of said heatable inside tube by regulating said fluid temperature within a predetermined range based on fluid temperature readings taken by said temperature control system;

wherein said outer peripheral surface of said inside tube having a high convective film coefficient value is rapidly

heated by said temperature control system such that said fluid is rapidly heated to within said predetermined range for use in said fluid heating system.

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